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ments for the benefit of other
persons, as well as all legal advertise-
ments, and advertisements of real
estate, or auction sales, sent in by
them, must be paid at the usual
rates.
Cards of acknowledgment, reli-
gious notices, and the like, are in-
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Births, marriages and deaths, in-
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be charged at 4 cents per line, the
charge being less than 25 cents.
No paper will be discontinued
until arrears are paid, except at
the option of the publisher.
Job Printing!
in its various branches executed
with despatch.
F. A. PRATT, Editor & Proprietor.

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Poetry.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

The following verses by a true woman, simple,
touching, and teeming with another's love, came
from Monroe, Michigan.
The Christmas eve! the tireless clock is tolling
the hour away.
And my household all are sleeping, dreaming of
Christmas day.
My countless varying duties are finished, one by
one,
Still, there's always something left—my work is
never done!
No I sit down by the cradle, my little one to
rock,
And while I sing a lullaby, I knit for him a sock.
I've filled some little stockings with candy and
with toys,
And hung them by the chimney place, to please
my darling boys.
They're sleeping sweetly in their cribs, I've tucked
the clothes in tight.
I've heard them say their evening prayer, and bid
them both good-night.
I know, that ere the daylight through the curtain
shall creep,
Their Merry Christmas wishes will wake me from
my sleep.
I've many, many thoughts to-night, and they are
rad to me!
Two stockings only hang, this year, where three
were wont to be!
The tears are falling thickly as I think of the day
When I said that little stocking forevermore away!
For the happy one that hung it there but one
short year ago
In yonder graveyard quietly sleepeth 'neath the
snow.
How many little stockings, that on last Christ-
mas day
Were filled by darling little ones, have since been
put away!
How many smiling faces, that to our nursery door
Came smiling 'Merry Christmas,' will come
again no more!
Their waxen hands are folded upon each quiet
breast,
And the Shepherd God has gathered those little
lambs to rest.
How many pleasant visions, and, oh what sad
ones too,
With each succeeding Christmas eve come vividly
to view!
I see again my childhood's home, and every loved
one's face!
The stockings hanging, as of yore, around the
chimney place,
From the red one of baby's to grandpa's sock
of gray—
Each in its own accustomed place, not even one
away.
But the pleasant vision passes, and one of darker
shade
Reveals how many changes each Christmas eve
has made!
For those whose stockings hung there so closely
side by side,
In happy days of childhood, are scattered far and
wide!
A few still linger here to see this Christmas eve
pass by,
But many, many more to-night within the church-
yard lie.
The baby's sock is finished—'tis sprinkled o'er
with tears:
Where will his tiny footsteps wander in future
years!
Perhaps this innocent will live to see, as I have
done,
The Christmas eve of childhood steal onward
one by one!
But, whether a life of sorrow, or whether a life
of joy,
I feel that I can trust with God my much-loved
baby-son.
The clock has struck the hour of twelve! I've
put the sock away,
And by the baby's cradle I now kneel down to
pray—
To ask that loving Savior who on Christmas morn
was given
To save our souls from sin and death, and fit us
all for Heaven,
That He would guide our footsteps, and fill us
with His love,
That we may sing together a Christmas hymn
above.

CHRISTMAS ANTHEM.

The day-star arises, announcing the morn,
Which tells that the God-sest of Saviors is born!
Prepare your rich gifts, ye wise of the earth,
And hasten to hail this wonderful birth.
No music of yours must flow at this hour—
For music there is, transcending your power.
'Tis harked from the skies; and hymned by the
Land
Of Angels, rejoicing to light on our land:
Arising, exulting, they crowd to survey
The Light of the World—the Fulness of Day!
Break now your voices, and sprinkle your flow-
ers,
Let fragrance and music enapture the hours;
Effusing the spices, and bidding the air,
From Heaven to Earth, the glad tidings declare.
But strange, no mortal and immortal mind,
A mere slumbering babe in a manger to find!
'Tis this the cradle of him, who is given
To bless the whole earth—to lift mortals to
Heaven!
And this the small hand that shall sever the chain
Which binds foul Sin to Death in its bondage of pain!
It is he, whose great advent, for ages foretold,
Was waited and sought by the prophets of old.
Then let the hosts of earth exulting raise
Their grateful songs of triumph and of praise.
For he the chains of Sin and Death will sever—
That reign hath now begun, which ends
never—
His kingdom shall endure, forever and forever!

EVILS OF LIFE.

Lord! if our days be few, why do we spend
And lavish them to such an evil end?
Or why, if they be evil, do we wrong
Ourselves and them, in wishing them so long?
Our days decrease, our evils still renew,
We make them evil, and then wish them few.

Selected Tale.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

A poor woman was sitting in her room
on a Christmas eve, and at her side was
her little son Philip, who was rocking his
infant brother in a cradle. A great deal
of snow had fallen during the day, and the
weather was wintry cold, but yet Mrs. Dean
had but little fire in the stove, and her
room was scantily furnished. While Philip's
father was living, he made out by his
industry to keep his family quite com-
fortable, but a sudden and short illness in
early Spring had terminated in death, and
now Mrs. Dean was entirely dependent on
her own exertions for the support of her-
self and her two children. As the earnings
of the hard working woman were
moderate, they were all obliged to subsist
on very poor fare, and to live as best they
could in a single room, and that small and
uncomfortable.
As the little Philip was rocking the cradle,
he seemed engaged in deep meditation,
and his mother noticing this, asked him
what he was thinking about.
'Mother, do you suppose that anybody
will make me a Christmas present, this
Christmas?'
'I fear not, my son,' replied his mother,
'for you know all our neighbors about
here are very poor people, and Mr. Ells-
on, for whom I work, knows nothing of
our affairs; and if he did, it is not at all
probable that he would think of making
you a present.'
'But, mother, what do you say to my
hanging up my stocking? Some of the
boys tell me that when children hang up
their stockings on Christmas eve, an old
flying Dutchman named Santa Claus goes
down all the chimneys, and puts presents
in the children's stockings.'
At this, Mrs. Dean laughed quite heart-
ily, and informed Philip that 'there was
no such person as Santa Claus, and that
when children's stockings were filled with
good things, it was done by their parents
and friends.'
Philip appeared quite disconsolate on
receiving this intelligence, but in a short
time he brightened up, as good children
generally do; for you must know that
Philip was a good boy, and did all he could
to help his mother along, in her poverty
and destitution.
'Mother,' remarked Philip, 'I know
what I should like Santa Claus to put into
my stocking; that is, if there was any
Santa Claus.'
'Well, what, my dear child?' inquired
his mother.
'I should like money; but more a great
deal than I suppose he would put in my
stocking, even if what the boys tell me
about him is all true, and I know it is not
true because my dear mother tells me so.'
'But Philip, I don't see what you can
want particularly with money; and sup-
pose now, you tell me how much money
you would like to have, and then if I
really had it, what would you do with it?'
'Mother,' replied the boy, 'don't laugh
at me now for such a foolish wish, but I
should like a whole dollar put in my stock-
ing, for you know that neither Santa Claus
nor any one else could cram a red sleigh
to run down hill on, in one of my little
stockings.' And Philip quite laughed at the
absurdity of Santa Claus attempting
to perform such an impossible exploit.
'So then, Philip,' his mother observed,
'your money would be spent for a little
sleigh. Well, I think it would be a very
pretty plaything for you to have, and you
would without doubt enjoy it very much;
but yet, my son, as there seems no pros-
pect of your having one, you must try to
feel contented.'
Philip's happy disposition led him to re-
gard his mother's good advice, and in a
short time he was singing some of his Sun-
day school airs to his little brother as mer-
rily as though he had been the owner not
only of a little sled, but of a large sleigh,
and a span of horses, to boot.
That night when Philip went to bed, he
slept sweetly and charmingly; but in a
few minutes his dreams there passed before
his vision, a crowd of boys running down
hill on their sleds, and he among them, the
happiest of all; and then the scene would
change to Santa Claus driving over the
tops of the houses with a team of clatter-
ing reindeer before a mammoth sleigh. This
sleigh was filled with all sorts of toys and
beautiful articles; and out of one side of the
sleigh, Philip thought he could perceive
that there was a little green sled sticking
out, and that its name was the Antelope;
and then it would seem to change itself
into a red sled with bright yellow runners,
and having his own name 'Philip Dean'
very plainly painted on the top of it.
But when Philip awoke in the morning,
he found it was all a dream; and that
there were no crowd of boys, no clattering
reindeer, no Santa Claus, no little green
sled named the Antelope, and no red sled
with yellow runners having the name of
Philip Dean painted upon the top of it.
I had a first rate dream though, any-
way,' Philip said to himself, and up he
jumped out of bed, and after dressing him-
self and repeating his little morning pray-

er, he went to work as quietly as possible,
and built a fire in the stove, and put on
the kettle. After this he set the things to
rights around the room, pulled out the lit-
tle table on which his mother and himself
were to take their breakfast. For some
time Philip had attended to these duties,
for he saw that his dear mother was ob-
liged to work very hard to make a little
money for them to live on, and he consid-
ered it a great pleasure to relieve her to
the extent of his ability. By the time Mrs.
Dean and the baby awoke, Philip's cheer-
ful little countenance was beaming with
honest pride that he had been so useful,
and when Mrs. Dean remarked that he was
a dear good boy, he felt sufficiently reward-
ed.
After breakfast, on the permission of his
mother, who desired him to return in half
an hour, he went to see some of his young
friends who were going on a little excu-
sion to some open lots, where there was a
suitable place for sledding down hill. As
he saw the boys blithe and merry, and over-
flowing with pleasant anticipation of the
sport they expected to have, he was seized
with a boyish sadness that he must be left
behind. He was a great favorite with the
boys, and one said, 'Come Phil, go along
with us, and I will lend you my sled half
the time!' and another sang out, 'Yes,
Phil, you must go, and you can sled down
hill on my Jupiter (that was the name of
his sled) all the time.'
But Philip was of too noble a nature to
avail himself of these generous offers, for
he knew that each boy ought to have the
use of his own sled, and as he had more-
over promised his mother that he would be
back within the half hour, he now turned
his steps homeward, hallooing out to his
little comrades as he went along. 'I hope
you will have a merry Christmas.' 'Same
to you, Phil, same to you,' responded all
the boys with one accord, and we only
wish you could go along with us.'
When Philip reached home, he tried to
amuse his little brother, and sang to him
as usual; and after the little fellow had
fallen asleep and was placed in his cradle,
Philip went on several errands for his
mother, and on completing them, having
nothing else to engage his attention, he
began to think of the boys who were out
sledding, and to indulge again in vain
wishes that he too had a sled. His mother
noticed that her beloved and obedient son
was becoming somewhat dispirited, and as
it was a sudden thought had struck her, she
remarked to him—'Philip, as there seems
to be but little chance of your getting a
Christmas present, why don't you make a
Christmas present to some one yourself?
and perhaps that will make you feel hap-
pier than though you received one.'
'Why, mother, how can I make a Christ-
mas present? all the money I have in the
world is the three cents which Mrs. Wil-
loughby gave me for carrying a hand box
up town for her.'
'Well, my son, there is poor old Jasper,
you know, next door but one to us. I
have no doubt but that you could really
make him quite happy in some way with
your three cents; at any rate, you can
give him some assistance about his room,
for I don't see how I can possibly go in
and help him to-day.'
Now you must know that Jasper was a
very poor old man, living in a little attic
room, and confined in the bed with rheu-
matism for a good part of the time; and
it was only through charity, and a helping
hand occasionally from his poor neighbors,
that he was enabled to get along. Mrs.
Dean often went in, and did him little fa-
vors in the way of making his bed and
dressing his room, but just now her work was
pressing, and she felt that she must keep
steadily at it, although it was Christmas
day.
Philip's countenance brightened up at
once at the proposal of his mother, and he
went to the little box where his money was
deposited, and putting the three cents in
his pocket, and telling his mother that
some one should have a Christmas pres-
ent, any way, he scudded down stairs as
rapidly as he could, and in a few minutes
was up in the miserable little attic room
where Jasper lived.
'Merry Christmas, Jasper, merry Christ-
mas to you; how do you do this cold morn-
ing?' was the first salutation of the good
boy.
'Ah Phil, is that you? You don't know
how glad I am to see you, for I am not
able to stir out of bed, and I have been
wishing for an hour back that some one
would step in and just give me a lift.'
'Well, here I am,' answered Phil,
'ready to do anything you wish me to;
and besides, Jasper, I have brought you a
Christmas present.'
'A Christmas present! who from Phil?'
'Who from? why from myself to be
sure.' And going up to the bed, he show-
ed Jasper the three cents he had brought
for him.
'But Phil, I don't like to take your
money. How much more have you got
for yourself?'
'Why none at all,' replied Philip, 'where
should I get money from, I would like to
know; this three cents Mrs. Willoughby
gave me for going an errand for her.'

'And you have brought all the money
you have in the world, to give to me?' in-
quired Jasper.
'To be sure I have. I came on pur-
pose. I want to make a Christmas pres-
ent just to see how it seems. Why, Jas-
per, do you know I never made a Christ-
mas present in my life, and I believe I
shall like it first rate.'
Poor Jasper's eyes filled with tears at
the kindness shown by the benevolent
boy; and he told Philip that if he would
make him a little fire, and would then buy
him some milk with his three cents, so that
he could have a comfortable breakfast of
warm milk and bread, he believed he should
feel better. Philip was a handy fellow,
and after he had made the fire, he took a
little pitcher, and having procured the milk
he heated it, and then crumpling in some
dry bread that Jasper had in his room, he
had prepared for the poor invalid a very
nourishing and palatable repast.
The warm fire, and the boiled bread and
milk, and above all, Philip's happy coun-
tenance and cheerful chat had such an in-
spiring influence upon poor old Jasper, that
he thought he would get up; that is, if
Philip could stand by the bed, and let him
bear his weight a little upon his young
friend's shoulder.
'Oh yes! we can manage that like a
book,' replied Phil, and applying himself to
the matter with great care and tenderness,
he soon had the pleasure of seeing Jasper
seated quite cozily before the little stove,
where the fire had been kindled and used
for cooking the simple breakfast. Then
Philip opened the window a very little,
just to air the room; and proposed to
spread up the bed afresh, so as to make it
more inviting, when Jasper should feel
like lying down again.
'What, such a little fellow as you are,
make up a bed? Why I believe I should
laugh to kill myself to see such a sight;
and sure enough old Jasper did laugh till
the tears ran down his cheek, to see little
Philip shake up the bed and bolster and
pillow, and then proceed to spread on the
sheets, and a blanket and coverlid. All
the while that Philip was bustling around
the room making it comfortable for the
old man, boy like, he told all about the
conversation that had taken place between
his mother and himself concerning Santa
Claus and hanging up his stockings; and
when he related his dream, how that he
saw Santa Claus and a great sleigh drawn
by reindeer, and a little green sled stick-
ing out of the large sleigh, named the An-
telope, and that afterwards it turned into
a red sled with yellow runners, and had
his own name painted upon it.
'Jasper was highly diverted with all this
childish prattle, and he told Philip that he
had not received such a delightful visit
from any one for weeks and weeks, and he
believed it had half way cured his rheuma-
tism.
Then it occurred to Philip that Jasper
might like to hear the news read, and so
he borrowed a newspaper at a neighbor-
ing grocery, and read to Jasper all the
most important items of news, and after-
wards, at Jasper's request, he read to him
a chapter from the Bible.
Having helped the feeble old man back
again to his bed, and thinking that possi-
bly his mother might now need his services,
Philip very affectionately shook Jasper by
the hand, bade him 'good morning,' and
hastened back to his mother's apartment.
You will not be surprised when I inform
you that Philip Dean had no more feeling
of sadness that day; in fact, he was so
overflowing with joy and good humor, that
his loud singing came very near waking
up the baby several times, and Mrs. Dean
was obliged to caution him a little.
'Mother,' observed the good little fel-
low as they sat together in the evening, 'I
think this is the happiest day, and the mer-
riest Christmas that I have ever spent in
my life. Somehow I seem to feel so hap-
py, and yet I cannot tell why, for I have
not been out sledding with the other boys,
and no one has given me a Christmas pres-
ent.'
'Can't my little son, by calling to mind
all that he has passed through this day,
imagine what has made him so happy?'
The dear child looked thoughtful for
some time, and at length replied, 'I guess,
mother, maybe it is because I made a
Christmas present to Jasper; and it seems
kind of right to me now, not to want
Christmas presents, so much as to wish to
make them to others. But I tell you, I
had a right good time with old Jasper; do
you know, mother, he seemed like a good
deal younger man after he got up and com-
menced talking with me, than I used to
think he was.'
'Ah, my child,' said the fond mother,
'you know that old Jasper is a good man,
a Christian, and perhaps while you were
there, he may have had an angel visit,
and that might have made him appear
much younger than he really is.'
Little Philip hardly understood what his
mother meant, and probably it was just as
well he did not; but his mother continued:
'You see now, dear Philip, that doing good
is the true way to be happy. It is more
blessed to give than receive. Now, Philip,
if some one had given you a sled, and you

had gone out sledding with the boys, do
you think you would have had as much
pleasure as your visit to Jasper has given
you?'
'Not half as much, mother, not half as
much; and I find now that I quite love
old Jasper, and I mean to go in there
whenever you can spare me, and do all I
can to assist him.'
After some further pleasant conversa-
tion with his mother, the little fellow be-
came drowsy and fell asleep, and again he
dreamed; but now his dream was of old
Jasper, and of the scenes and occurrences
which had taken place during the day. Then
he thought that Jasper was changed into
a young and beautiful man, and that he
lived in a palace on the top of a moun-
tain. And again (so strangely do our
minds wander in dreams) it seemed to him
that a voice was speaking to him out of
the sky, and that the voice said, 'Philip,
inasmuch as you did it under one of the
least of these, you did it unto me.'
But he had not slept long before he was
aroused by a knocking at the door, and his
mother requesting him to open the door;
he did so, when a young man made his ap-
pearance, and asked whether 'Mrs. Dean
lived in that room.' On being told that
she did, he again inquired 'whether she
had a son named Philip.'
'Yes sir, I am Philip.'
'Here, then, is a parcel for you; it is
directed, as you may see—For Philip Dean.
Good evening, Philip; and the messenger
at once departed.
It seemed to Philip that he was still in
a dream, and it was several moments be-
fore he could collect his scattered ideas,
and realize the true state of the case. The
package was quite a large one, and on
undoing it, what do you suppose it was
that met the wondering gaze of both mo-
ther and son? Why, it was a beautiful
little red sled, with yellow runners, and on
it was painted these two words:
'The Antelope.' A card was also at-
tached on one side, and on the card was
written—
'This little sleigh called the Antelope
is for Philip Dean. The good dreams of
a good boy have come to pass.'
Philip was not only overjoyed, but he
was quite astounded, and even his mother
was unable to explain so deep a mystery.
'Where could it have come from, mo-
ther? How could anybody have a sled to
give away know that I had had such a
dream?'
'Have you told your dream to no one,
my son?'
'No, mother, not to a single soul; oh,
yes, I remember now that I did tell it to
old Jasper, but to no one else, and old
Jasper, you know, mother, has no sleighs
to give away, nor money to buy them
with.' And Philip laughed quite heartily
at the idea of old Jasper sending him a
sleigh.
But how pleased was Philip with his
good sleigh called the 'Antelope.' He
showed it to the baby, and had it set upon
the little supper table, so that he could
see it while he was eating, his mother in-
dulging him in his childish fancy, and
when he went to bed at night he carried
his sled with him. On the following morn-
ing he was out betimes for the purpose
of using and exhibiting his present; and
all his boyish companions were highly
pleased to see that he had such a beau-
tiful sled, but when he related his dream,
and told them how he had received his
sled, they were more puzzled about the
matter if possible than Philip himself was.
They also wished they might have such
true dreams. One said he should like to
dream for a gun, another for a horse, and
another for a watch.
In the course of the day (the day suc-
ceeding Christmas) Philip made a visit to
Jasper, carrying his sled with him, and
telling him that he had received it as a
present from some unknown hand. 'But
who could it have been, Jasper?' he en-
quired; 'who do you think knew anything
about my dream, and made it turn out true
in this way?'
'Why, some one to whom you told your
dream,' replied Jasper.
'But I told it to no one but your own
self.'
'Aha, aha, I see now, I see,' remarked
Jasper, looking very wise; 'it was a lit-
tle bird of the air that told your dream,
and I guess I saw the little bird spread
his wings. Yes, yes, continued the old
man, shaking his head very sagaciously,
'I understand the whole of it I understand
the whole of it.'
You can readily imagine that Philip's
curiosity to 'understand the whole of it'
also, was considerably excited; and then
Jasper stated to him that just after he had
left on Christmas morning a charitable la-
dy who had heard of his destitution had
called on him, and rendered some perma-
nent aid. After she had sat awhile, she
expressed herself surprised at the smooth
appearance of everything about the room;
and then Jasper, being an old man, and
loving to talk as honest old people do, went
right ahead and gave a full account of
Philip's visit.
He spoke of the kind assistance he had
rendered, in getting him in and out his

bed; in setting the scanty furniture about
the room to rights; and of his giving him
the three cents, all he had in the world. —
After this he even proceeded (old man
like) to relate Philip's dream of Santa
Claus and the big sleigh drawn by reindeer;
and of the little green sled turning into a
red one, with yellow runners, and having
Philip's name painted upon the top of it.
In fact, Jasper told the whole story to the
lady just as he had received it from little
Philip.
'And now, Philip,' says Jasper, 'you
may depend upon it that this lady was the
Santa Claus who sent you your sled, for
there are no miracles now-a-days, you
know.'
And let me tell you, my young readers,
in conclusion, that old Jasper was correct
in his opinion. The good lady felt great
interest in his story about Philip, than
Jasper supposed, and having some phi-
lanthropic in her disposition as well as piety
and benevolence, she resolved that one
dream at least should turn out true. She
found some difficulty in procuring a sled
called the Antelope, but at length she was
successful, and sent it to Philip, just as I
have related it to you. A short time af-
ter she called on Mrs. Dean and Philip, and
on becoming acquainted with the excel-
lent character that both mother and son
sustained, she proved to them a very kind
and valuable friend.
The moral of my story is this:
Philip had a happy, cheerful disposition,
and the bible says, 'A merry heart doeth
good like a medicine.'
'Pleasant words are as a honeycomb,
sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.'
He was generous and charitable to poor
old Jasper; and again the bible assures us
that 'He who giveth to the poor lendeth
to the Lord.' He gave his little all to
Jasper, and the Lord so ordered it that the
innocent desire of his heart was granted;
a beautiful sled was given him, and more
than this, he had secured the friendship of
a lady who was both able and willing to
assist him in after life. It is our duty,
however, to be kind and loving and chari-
table, without any expectation of earthly
reward. You must have noticed that
Philip in doing good to Jasper, had not
the most remote hope that he would re-
ceive anything for it—but in this case it
was so ordered through the good provid-
ence of God that his benevolence was re-
warded a thousand fold.
The Gizzard of Birds.—This organ,
well known as the gizzard, is endowed
with immense power for grinding and
crushing; it is almost wholly made up of
two semi globular masses of dense muscle,
the two opposing faces of which are coat-
ed with a layer of thick leathery skin.—
Between these the vegetable substances to
be ground are dropped from the crop, just
as corn is dropped from the hopper be-
tween the mill stones; and the force ex-
erted when these faces work on each other
is immense, and all but irresistible.—
The facility with which substances the
most hard, angular, and even acute are
ground down, and that with perfect impu-
nity to the coats of the gizzard, is proved
by the researches of Plater, Reaumur,
Redi and Spallanzani. The experiments
of the last named philosopher possess the
highest interest; he introduced tin tubes,
variously strengthened with wire, into the
stomachs of turkeys, and invariably found
them crushed, flattened, broken and vari-
ously distorted. Thick balls of glass were
broken, ground down, and in a few hours
completely pulverized. Pieces of glass
with sharp, jagged edges shared the same
fate, without in the least wounding the cel-
lular skin of the gizzard. Needles were
cast into a ball of lead, so that their points
projected a quarter of an inch, and, being
encased in a soft substance, were thrust
down the throat of a turkey; in twenty-
four hours the points were broken off
close, or rubbed down, and the gizzard un-
injured. Finally, says Spallanzani, 'I
fixed twelve small lancets, very sharp
both at the points and edges, in a similar
ball of lead. They were such as I use for
the dissection of small animals. The ball
was given to a turkey-cock, and left eight-
teen hours in the stomach; at the expira-
tion of which time that organ was opened,
but nothing appeared except the naked
ball, the twelve lancets having been broken
down, to pieces. I discovered three in the
large intestines, pointless and mixed with
the other contents; the other nine were
missing, and had probably been voided.—
The stomach was as sound and entire as
that which had received the needles.'
Christmas Decorations.—The practice of
decorating houses and churches with ever-
greens and flowers is of early date, and the
idea was derived from the fact that our
Saviour himself permitted green branches
to be used as a token of rejoicing. Some
of the early Christian Councils, however,
considered the practice as savoring of pa-
ganism, and enacted laws to that effect,
but the custom was continued; and the
holly, and ivy, and the mistletoe, were the
plants originally employed, the latter hav-
ing been adopted in England from the
rights of the Druids.

Christmas Day.—The star which the
wise men of the East saw in the heavens
to conduct them to the manger-cradle of
the newly-born Emmanuel, and the glory
which shone around the shepherd watchers
in the fields of Bethlehem, have continued
to glow, and beam on the holy festive sea-
son which Christianity has adopted in
commemoration of the birth of Him who
was to be the mediator between God and
the fallen race of man.
There is a sweet influence shed over the
Christmas festival, unlike that of any other.
We keep up the birthdays of the
loved ones at home with merry hearts, but
the joy is not all-pervading, and there is
nothing of that general sympathy between
all the human family which bursts into ex-
pression and enjoyment in a thousand dif-
ferent ways as from every quarter the
'merry Christmas' is gleefully and heartily
interchanged! It is the season for home
enjoyment, when we delight to gather
around the festive board and draw the
domestic circle around the fireside. Christ-
mas should always be kept within doors,
and in this particular it differs from our
next holiday, when the interchange of
friendly visits and congratulations so prop-
erly inaugurate the incoming of the New
Year. Christmas is a private festival, the
New Year is a public one; the former ap-
peals to the home affections and the moral
sentiments; the latter is an outburst of
general enthusiasm when all the world
holds revel, and by a strange contrast we
take no note of time when we celebrate
its loss and rapid flight.
How many happy homes will resound
with laughter to-day! How many young
hearts will be lighter, and how many bright
eyes beam brighter at the coming of the
long-expected festival! How the merry
laugh will ring out early in the morning
as stockings are ransacked for the gifts of
Santa Claus! How the Christmas tur-
key will be enjoyed, and the mince pie!
How everything will be seasoned with hap-
piness and spiced with hilarity! The
beautiful feature of the season is the giv-
ing of appropriate presents, as tokens
and mementoes of affection. Everybody thank
heaven! has at least one friend to cherish,
and one heart to make happy; but should
there be an exception, let him go out into
the world and find a brother unfortunate; seek
out the home that will be without a Christ-
mas feast unless bestowed by the hand of
charity, and carry sunshine into that dwell-
ing. Let all who are blessed in their
store remember the poor, and endeavor to
make the happiness of to-day universal.—
Such charity will be 'twice blessed,' and a
gentle word of kindly smile to accompany
it will bring down a benediction from above
and gratitude from the recipient. As the
widow gave freely her mite, so the poor-
est man can part at least with a smile or
kind word to his fellow-sufferer, which
will not fail to be registered to the credit
side in the great book of final account.
We salute our readers with the compli-
ments of the season. To one and all a
'merry Christmas!' We have the mate-
rials for merriment, the hearts for enjoy-
ment, and the disposition to make the most
of them. So, then, giving the reins up to
the galloping old year, and let us have one
jolly day, and at its close
Let's take a flight
Toward heaven to-night
And leave dull care behind us.
Happiness arising from Knowledge.—
It is a fine thing to know that which is
unknown to others. It is still more dig-
nified to remember that we have gained it
by our own energies. The struggle after
knowledge too, is full of delight. The in-
tellectual chase not less than the material
one, brings fresh vigor to our pulses, and
infinite palpitations of strange and sweet
suspense. The idea that is gained with
effort, affords far greater satisfaction than
that which is acquired with dangerous fac-
ility. We dwell with more fondness on
the perfume of the flower that we have
ourselves tended, than on the odor which
we cull with carelessness, and cast away
without remorse. The strength and sweet-
ness of our knowledge depend upon the im-
pression which it makes upon our minds.
It is the liveliness of the ideas that it af-
fords, which renders research so fascinat-
ing, so that a trifling fact or deduction,
when discovered or worked out by our own
brain, affords us infinitely greater pleasure
than a more important truth obtained by
the exertions of another.
We only begin to know how to live,
when we know how to measure ourselves
with subjects; that is to say, to propor-
tion our attachment and their application
to their importance. It is thus, we avoid
too great an indifference for great things,
and too great an ardor for small ones.
David Hume, to induce a young lady,
who was very fond of reading novels, to
read history, told her that there was a
great difference between them, in point of
falsehood, one being in general almost as
true as the other.
The greatest ambition entirely conceals
itself, when it finds that what it aspired to
is unattainable.

To all, the compliments suitable to the season; and a "Merry Christmas" to any who have good reason to be merry, so far at least as they may be merry on the present occasion without detracting from their future enjoyment of life. And, in the matter of economy as well as of conduct, while the peace and rights of others are not disturbed, each one is supposed to be his own steward. But what is most to be admired and valued in this land of religious freedom and equality, no one needs to be disturbed merely by the peculiar views of others in relation to the observance of this annual festival. Every one possesses the privilege here, by inherent right, of choosing for himself what in other countries could only be enjoyed, if enjoyed at all, under the grace of an act of toleration. The praise given to the founders of this privilege in Rhode Island as an acknowledged civil institution, is so well deserved and of so glorious a character that it cannot fail to perpetuate the fame of the State; notwithstanding any uncharitable errors which may have since been committed. But it is believed that there has never been in Rhode Island any interruption by law, or without law and against law, of the free use of this festival by any denomination.

About sixteen centuries ago, or before, when the custom of observing the present day began or was beginning to be general, it was in some instances subjected to the most frightful and deadly persecution on record. But paganism, it appears, soon became reconciled to the ceremonies and to the date of Christmas, which coincided so well with its own observances of days and seasons. The unchristian world was satisfied. The returning sun in the heavens gladdened their hearts with hope, and they spread their garlands of evergreen in anticipation of the time when the earth would again be clothed in verdure. And the date may be said to have fallen into the line of established usages in the world rather than to have been chosen in accordance with the best information. The twenty-fifth of December is included in the rainy season in Judea. Flocks and shepherds it is thought could not have been in the open fields of Bethlehem at that time, as we are told was the case at the time of the nativity. But the precise date is not so important as the fact itself which all Christians agree to commemorate. And the "old honor" paid to the day is still continued more or less in all Christian countries, so called; and that honor may be said to consist, in a great measure at least, in gestures and festivities.

But strange that an anniversary so suggestive of the most transcendent importance, should be subordinated to so great a degree to the grossness of animal appetite and to frivolous pastimes. This still appears to be the case in Europe, and especially in England, where Americans are in the habit of looking for instruction in regard to this and other things bearing upon the course and order of social life. Some people perhaps regard Christmas as but little else than an English institution. The descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers have not yet lost perhaps all the impression which they may be said to have inherited upon this subject, though it would be unreasonable to retain any prejudice against the "day" in this country. Christmas, like the theatre, helps to uphold the existing order of things in a land of unequal rights; but are not in themselves and of course prejudicial to republics. The few in England are mostly benefited by pomp and time honored usages and parades. The "Yule Log" no longer is said to be seen upon the hearths of the people in general at this season, though it retains perhaps its importance in the Northern countries in many instances. Other signs of festivity distinguish the Court of the Queen and the mansions of the wealthy, where you must look to discover the splendor and good cheer of an English Christmas.

In the royal and aristocratic quarters, it seems, a state minister is appointed to preside over the revelry and the pastimes to which the inmates are devoted; and he is no doubt properly called the "Lord of Misrule." In Scotland they once had a similar functionary, called the "Abbot of Unreason"—though his office was abolished by act of Parliament about three hundred years ago. But the "Lord of Misrule" is understood to still maintain his authority from all Hallowe'en to Candlemas, presiding over the gaming, music, dancing, &c. of a most religious season—when the eating of minced pie is said to have been the chief test of orthodoxy. No wonder perhaps, that rigid Puritans could only regard these recreations at such a period with the utmost horror; and that they cursed such abuses of a sacred season with a wrath that at best seemed truly final. To eat, to drink, to sport—and perhaps to say one's prayers in a dress which the fashion would approve—does not appear to compromise the whole duty of a Christian community on such an occasion. But the Puritans in this country are no longer in antagonism with a persecuting "establishment," and they can afford and we trust do afford to be more charitable. The day is here regarded more or less on all hands, as the anniversary of a new era, and of the introduction of a new religion into the world, on which the morality and happiness of mankind must forever depend. The end aimed at appears to be to restrain vicious desires and to check violent passions; to turn mankind from doing evil and to lead them to do good to one another.

This Fourth R. I. Regiment are, probably, like all other regiments, anxious to come home, but the chances are not very favorable, unless two-thirds of the men present re-enlist for three years.

It is a matter of some gratification to the whole regiment, that there is a prospect of our spending a part of the month at home—Lancaster, Maine. But in order to make every effort to obtain permission from the War Department, to take the regiment to Rhode Island for the purpose of receiving its furloughed men. We are in a Department, where there are no active operations for at least four months, either on our part or the enemy's, and providing we were not needed for active service elsewhere, it is not probable that the cause would suffer during our temporary absence. Gen. Butler is now in Rhode Island, having been sent there for the above purpose by Gen. Butler. May be he is successful.

The Scientific American which is more especially intended for Mechanics, Inventors, Manufacturers, Engineers, Agriculturists and Chemists, and which is well adapted to all classes, commences its thirty-eighth volume on the 1st of January. Terms \$1 per annum. Each of the above classes will find a vast amount of useful and interesting reading matter in its pages with excellent illustrations and description of all the principal inventions of the day. Address Messrs & Co., 47 Park row, N. Y.

Learn, William B. Parker, of the 4th R. I. Regiment, is at home on a short furlough.

Gen. Burnside has arrived in Providence.

This report, some time ago circulated in the journals, that the Mexicans had retaken Puebla from the French, appears to have got into circulation without any foundation in fact; and, like too many other articles of good news, to have become worthless, while we were waiting for its confirmation. Who could avoid hoping that the Mexicans would be delivered from their invaders, even on the appearance of what might seem to be a very slight foundation for hope? In view of the present situation of that unfortunate country, however, the time when anything could be done for a restoration of the republic and for the security of civil and religious liberty, has long since past. What could be expected of a people who had spent so many years in civil strife, wasting and destroying their energies and resources? The cancer of corruption and treachery has perhaps eaten out the life of public spirit and left no animating support to public virtue. The few leading men who stood by their country's independence and freedom are becoming still less in number by death and desertion. COMMON-FRONT, who was reckoned one of the ablest on the liberal side, is reported as having finished his earthly career. VICTOR, equally able perhaps though of less distinction, is said to have gone over to the enemy and to have taken with him the States of which he was governor. MEXIA, the cruel and barbarous rebel against the constitutional government of Mexico, has taken possession, it appears, of Queretaro in the name of the French. And while other places have been abandoned by the Mexican authorities, the French are advancing it is said upon San Luis Potosi, which JUREZ had lately made the seat of his falling government. And soon we shall hear perhaps of the grand entrance of the Franco American Empire, to take full possession of the country under the stipulated guarantee of its integrity. And possibly the report may be true, which said, that MAXIMILIAN made it an indispensable condition to his acceptance of the throne, that France should prevent the reconstruction of the American Union. *Ubiqne gentium sumus?* Where in the world are we?

NAVAL.—Acting Master's Mate GEORGE U. WILLIAMS, has been promoted to Acting Ensign in the Navy and detached from the gunboat *Amesbury* and ordered to report to Rear Admiral H. PAULding. Mr. WILLIAMS was formerly in the maritime employ of various merchants in this city, but when the President called for the first 300,000 men, he enlisted in the 4th R. I. V., and when a call was made for volunteers to man the gunboats at the taking of Roanoke Island, he offered his services. He was on board the *Commodore Perry* when the fleet was destroyed in Pamlico Sound, and raised the National Flag on the first vessel captured. He was appointed Master's Mate and at the attack on Kingston, N. C., received a severe wound. He is represented as one well worthy of promotion and we are pleased to note his advancement.

Acting Master's Mate, WILLIAM J. REDDING, has been promoted to Acting Ensign in the Navy. Mr. REDDING was a volunteer member of the Newport Artillery and served in the three months campaign of the First R. I. Detached Militia. After the return of the regiment he received the appointment of Master's Mate in the Navy and having shown himself competent and brave, has received his promotion. He is attached to the gunboat *J. S. Chambers*.

Acting Master's Mate JOHN UYERK is ordered to the steamer *Chocoma*.

Lieutenant THOMAS L. SWANN has been detached from the Naval Academy and ordered to the steam frigate *Brooklyn*.

Acting Master's Mate JAMES COOKMAN, of the gunboat *Essex*, is at home on a short furlough.

THE late PATRICK DENNISON, whose decease was noticed some weeks since, was a very industrious, honest and industrious man, and by his frugality was enabled to accumulate property valued at about \$2500. By his will he bequeathed \$1000 cash, and a house and lot on a corner leading from Bowery street, to his youngest son, a cripple. To his eldest son he gave \$100, and \$100 to the Pastor of the Catholic Church. After the death of the youngest son, the property was to go to the eldest son, and after the death of both children, all the property should go to the Catholic Church, for the support of the orphan of the church. DENNISON, the eldest son, was a member of the 4th R. I. Regiment, and lost his life recently at Portsmouth, Va., while on picket duty. THOMAS A. COOKMAN, the youngest son, died last Sunday, consequently the entire property falls to the church. We understand there are four or five houses in the city, which have bequeathed been given to the church for this purpose, and the income is of great benefit in assisting the maintenance of children who would otherwise be cast upon the world without education or government, but who are now properly cared for at the Catholic Orphan Asylum at Providence.

THE first battalion 14th Regiment Heavy Artillery, (federated) under command of Major COMMERCE, sailed from this port Sunday morning in the steamer *Columbia*. The balance of State bounty was paid to the men on their passage down from Providence Saturday, but the job was not completed in some hours after their arrival in the harbor. Every man answered to his name as the roll was called, and one only was allowed absent Saturday evening. They were apparently in good spirits when the steamer left the harbor, and we have no doubt they will give a good report of themselves hereafter. The number of men reported to fill the regiment has been secured, and some twelve hundred are now on Dutch Island anxious to follow their comrades, and get in a warmer climate.

Mr. CHARLES SPENCER, fitter, fell from a scaffold in one of the buildings on T. Jones' wharf Monday, and severely injured, he died, and it is feared internally.

Mr. BENJAMIN BOSS was thrown from a wagon Tuesday, and badly injured, but is getting along nicely.

A horse attached to a wagon belonging to Mr. R. B. TINKER, started from the Atlantic House Wednesday afternoon, and brought up against a lamp-post at the foot of Mary street, which was broken off.

CONGRESS has adjourned until the 5th of January. Two resolutions have been passed, commencing the thanks of Congress to Gen. Grant and the officers and men under his command, and to Capt. JOHN BROWN, for services rendered and general good conduct. A bill has also passed appropriating \$20,000,000 for advance pay and premium to enlisted men, to have effect until the 1st of January.

MASTERS family will be made happy to-day by the identity of Dr. WILLIAM N. MARRIS, of New Orleans who has sent \$100 to the Government Customs for the purchase of articles for a Christmas dinner to the deserving poor of the city.

Two rebel reports from the *Ironclad* and the *Monitor* were entangled in the contrabands in Chatham, was a most pitiful thing.

THE European journals appear to have had nothing very remarkable to say of our American affairs, since the prospect of a general war in that quarter engaged their attention. And it was natural and to be expected that, under such circumstances, they should attend to their own affairs rather than look abroad for the sake of intermeddling in the affairs of others. And though the situation of this country is of a nature to excite a deep interest everywhere in the passing events of the times, yet the English and French journals of late appear to have had trouble enough of their own and nearer home to absorb their most earnest consideration. And great exertions appear to be made for a peaceful settlement of the various questions in dispute between the States of Europe. Difficult as such a task is likely to be, some who have a better opportunity than most, journalists to discern the signs of the times, appear to have more confidence in the hope that a great war in Europe will be avoided. But their opinion upon their own affairs, or their speculations upon the affairs of this country, are seldom of great interest to Americans—except as showing what they are inclined to say rather than as evidence of what should be said. Our civil war has had some effect, however, to lead the editors of the London journals into a better knowledge of the geography and institutions of the "States," as they call this part of the continent. But so far as our written communications are concerned, they have evidently taken no great pains to make themselves accurately acquainted with them. An English journal has perhaps but little idea of a political constitution which can be read, chapter and verse, or article and section. And in relation to military matters their reports to be the same lack of accurate perception. The comments of the *Times* upon the defeat of Gen. BURNIDE by Gen. GRANT at Missionary Ridge are a remarkable instance of a disinclination to admit the evidence of facts. The editor it appears is at a loss to discover whether the battle of the 25th of November was "a real defense on the part of the Confederates," or "whether they fought to cover a retreat previously determined" upon and already commenced. Further information it is likely will place the embarrassment of the *Times* in a clearer light before the English public. The truth is not anywhere too well understood.

REAL ESTATE SALES.—Mr. James C. Powell has sold his estate on Main Avenue to Mr. Edward L. Brinley of Philadelphia for \$8000. (Incorrect text.)

Mr. Charles Russell has sold his estate in Prospect Hill street to Mrs. Thomas G. Pitman for \$2,700.

Mr. John Oman has sold a house and lot on South Baptist street to Mr. Thomas Lewis for \$1200.

The farm belonging to the heirs of Eliphaz Barker, dead, containing thirty acres, has been sold. Mr. Frederick A. Prekham, has fourteen acres, with house and outbuildings, on Swamp road, for \$4000 and Mr. Peter T. Sherman sixteen acres on the East road, for \$2000.

At the Annual Meeting of St. John's Lodge No. 1, held at Masonic Hall, Monday evening, 21st inst., the following were elected officers for the ensuing year:—

William Gilpin, W. Master.
William J. Underwood, S. Warden.
John Fadden, J. Warden.
Edmond J. Townsend, Treasurer.
Ara Blidwell, Secretary.
Nathaniel B. Allen, Sen. Deacon.
John Myers, Junior Deacon.
Alexander N. Barker, Sen. Steward.
John M. Anthony, Junior Steward.
Thomas T. Carr, Chaplain.
Oliver Potter, Marshal.
J. Goshen Spangler, Tyler.

Although paper and every article of which a newspaper is made, has advanced in price, in some articles doubled, yet we are not disposed to alter the terms of the *Mercury*, but we ask our patrons to be prompt in their payments and thus enable us to meet our expenses. We have added several new subscribers to our list the past fortnight and hope to add many more to commence with the year. Our terms are \$2.00; or \$1.75 if paid strictly in advance and there are very few families in the city, but our offer of 1-10 or 2-10 per cent per week for a paper which will endeavor to keep them posted in passing events.

THE bark *Aurora*, with 650 tons of coal for the Gas Company in this city, is reported to have put into Quezon, looking, with rudder and mainmast sprung. She sailed from Shields, Reg. the 9th of October and should have made the passage in less than forty days, but is only some three hundred and fifty miles from her starting point after some eighty days' absence. The Company will have to look elsewhere for coal as their supply is getting short.

MOSES, PETER & WERTCOTT, who have served their country in the Ninth and Twelfth regiments, announce in our columns to-day their commencement of business, and as they deserve a share of public patronage, we have no doubt they will receive it. It is gratifying to notice our young men thus endeavoring to find occupations in their native city.

THERE are upwards of thirty houses in this city rented for the season of 1864 and applications are made daily by new parties. The probability is, that there will be a scarcity of houses to let next season, as many heretofore occupied by strangers have been purchased by parties who will occupy them during the summer.

WE are unable to state the amount received by the Young Ladies Union Aid Society at their Fair which closed last evening, but judging from the crowds who attended, they must have realized a handsome sum. Great efforts were made to render the Fair attractive, by decorating the Hall and offering useful and appropriate articles for sale.

THE three Episcopal churches in the city have been dressed with evergreen, in commemoration of the Savior's birth, and services will be held in each. An extra attraction at the Emmanuel will be a new organ which has just been purchased by the efforts of the Rector's daughters.

DRISTON ROCK.—We learn that an accurate picture of this celebrated antique and the surrounding scenery, has been drawn by Mr. G. A. SARGENT, of Ipswich, and will be issued in the course of a week from the lithographic atelier of PARSONS, of Boston.

MR. ROBERT S. BARKER has been chosen Captain of the Aqueduct Infantry in place of H. L. BARNES, recently elected Colonel, and MR. THOMAS STEVENS has been chosen 1st Lieutenant.

THE soldier of the Fourth Rhode Island Regiment who was sentenced to be shot for desertion has been reprieved by the President, as were some other soldiers under similar sentence in the same direction.

Two contributions money received by the government as the result of the last draft now amounts to \$12,000,000.

ENGLISH travelers in this country, seeing things from our standpoint at home, are very apt to find fault with some peculiarities in American society and institutions differing from the English, but which in the "States" are considered great improvements. Great fault has been found with it is said, that the political metropolis is never or seldom located in the same place with the commercial metropolis. They cannot see the reason why the capital of a State or of the Union, should not also be made what we call the seat of government, in other instances. But they do not consider that, according to our theory, the governments are made for the people, and not the people for the governments. And that it is not true in this country, that the chief emporium is more accessible to all parts of a State or of the Union, than some eligible point more central would be. And it is the convenience of the people, and not the pomp of their public servants, which has caused such points to be selected. Lord HASTINGS, who spent some months last summer in the "States," has had his attention directed to some of the faults of the Yankees it appears from his late speech before a literary society on his return to the other side of a water. He had met with some in this country, it seems, who charged many of the faults and vices of our Northern population to the general diffusion of a superficial education. But his Lordship did not fully agree in that opinion, though he admits that the Yankees have faults; such as the love of money and of two great sentences in trade—and that they have not all the virtues which in such an hour of trial as the present, are sometimes found in a less cultivated people. But he does not attribute these defects to the wider spread of popular education in the New England and other States. As the English education he sets down, however, as injudicious in some respects, leading to an admiration of what is great rather than of what is good. And after leaving school, he concludes that little is read by the graduates besides the daily press—which he thinks is not of a character to make any people either great or good; and therefore no solid foundation is laid for either sense or taste in their general character. They suppose, he says, that they are not generally becoming poorer for the war, though nothing can be clearer to thinking men, than that the present course can only end in utter and complete national ruin.

GEN. BURNIDE'S COMPLIMENT TO HIS SOLDIER.—On his arrival at Cincinnati Gen. Burnside was warmly received, and on Friday evening last he was attended, when he made a speech of thanks, during which he said:—

"I sincerely hope that peace may soon be restored to our beloved country; but as long as these troubles continue and I can be of service, I am ready to do all in my power. I have tried to do my best; and what I have done in East Tennessee has been due to the full co-operation of the subordinate officers and privates under my command. Not a single officer or a man has for a single moment intimated that in his opinion I was making mistakes or erring in my movements; and not one at any time hesitated to render a full, faithful and energetic obedience to orders in all things. But without standing this happy union of effort on the part of the officers in command of the field, the chief praise of our success is due to the subordinate officers and men in the ranks. Thousands of men in the ranks deserve the credit that is given to the leaders. Many of them have no relations in the country—foreigners all, and will never hear of them again. And they fight for the country they love, being actuated by genuine patriotism. I owe all my success to this patriotism in the ranks, as also do all other generals who have been successful. The principal achievements of this war are chiefly to be credited to the subordinate officers and the devoted fighting men in the ranks, who are better and braver than the leaders. I have never heard of a man who has been successful in this war, who has not been successful in the ranks, as also do all other generals who have been successful. The principal achievements of this war are chiefly to be credited to the subordinate officers and the devoted fighting men in the ranks, who are better and braver than the leaders. I have never heard of a man who has been successful in this war, who has not been successful in the ranks, as also do all other generals who have been successful. 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